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*Marshall's Religious Tracts.*

The great Messenger of Mortality;

OR,

# *Death and the Lady.*

To which are added,

## Meditations on Death,

By THOMAS a. KEMPIS.

*And a HYMN, on Time's Rapidity.*

Printed by J. Marshall, Newcastle.

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## *Death and the Lady.*

DEATH.

FAIR Lady, lay your coſtly robes aſide,
No longer may you glory in your pride:
Take leave of all your carnal, vain delight,
I'm come to ſummon you away this night.

LADY.

What bold attempt is this? pray let me know
From whence *you* come, and whither I *muſt* go?
Shall I, who am a Lady, ſtoop or bow
To ſuch a pale-fac'd viſage! *Who art thou?*

DEATH.

Do *you* not know me? Well, I'll tell you then,
'Tis I that conquer all the ſons of men!
No poſt of honour from my dart is free:
My name is DEATH—Have you not heard of me?

LADY.

Yes, I have heard of thee, time after time;
But, being in the glory of my prime,
I did not think you would have call'd ſo ſoon:
Why muſt my morning ſun go down at noon?

DEATH.

Talk not of noon, you may as well be mute,
This is no time at all for to diſpute:
Your riches, jewels, gold, and garments fine,
Your houſes, lands, and *all*, you *muſt* reſign.
Tho' thy vain heart to riches was inclin'd,
Yet *thou* muſt die, and leave them all behind.

LADY.

My heart is cold,—I tremble at the news,
Here's bags of gold, if thou wilt me excuſe,
And ſeize on thoſe (thus finiſh thou the ſtriſe)
Who are thro' pain grown weary of their life.
Are there not many bound in priſon ſtrong,
And there in grief of ſoul have languiſh'd long,
Who wiſh to find a grave, a place of reſt,
From all their grief, with which they're ſore oppreſt?
Beſides, there's many, with their hoary head
And palſied joints, thro' which their joys are fled:

Releaſe thou them, whoſe ſorrows are ſo great;
But ſpare *my* life to have a longer date.

DEATH.

Tho' they, by age, are full of grief and pain,
Yet their appointed time they muſt remain:
I come to none before my warrant's ſeal'd,
And when it is, they muſt ſubmit and yield.
I take no bribe,—believe me this is true,—
Prepare *yourſelf* to go, I only come for *you*.

LADY.

Ye learned Doctors, now exert your ſkill,
And let not *Death* of me obtain his will;
Prepare your cordials, let me comfort find:
My gold ſhall fly like chaff before the wind.

DEATH.

Forbear to call, their ſkill will never do;
They are but mortals here as well as you:
I give the fatal wound,—My dart is ſure,
'Tis far beyond the Doctor's ſkill to cure.
You now may freely let your riches fly;
But know, fair Lady, you *muſt ſurely* die:
My Lord beheld wherein you did amiſs,
And calls you hence to give account for this.

LADY.

Oh, heavy news! muſt I no longer ſtay?
How ſhall I ſtand in the great judgment day!
Down from her eyes the cryſtal tears did
flow,
While ſhe with tears exclaim'd, And muſt
I go?
Lord Jeſus Chriſt! have mercy on my ſoul!
My ſins are great, but *Thou* canſt make
me whole:
Tho' juſtly I deſerve thy righteous frown,
Yet pardon, Lord, and pour forgiveneſs
down:
Then, with a ſigh, ſhe bid the world adieu,
And ſhut her eyes on ſin and ſorrow too.

Thus do we ſee the great and mighty fall,
For cruel Death ſhows no reſpect at all
To any one, of high or low degree,—
Great men ſubmit to Death as well as we:
Tho' they are gay, their lives are but a
ſpan,
A lump of clay—ſo vile a creature's Man!

## *Meditations on Death.*

THIS life will ſoon be at an end: conſider therefore how thy affairs ſtand as to the next.

Man is here to-day; to-morrow he is gone.

When he is out of ſight he is ſoon forgotten.

Thou ſhouldſt ſo order thyſelf, in all thy thoughts, and all thy actions, as if thou wert to die to-day.

Hadſt thou a clear conſcience, thou wouldſt not fear death.

It were better to avoid ſin, than to fly death.

If thou art not prepared to-day, how wilt thou be to-morrow?

To-morow is uncertain, and how knoweſt thou that thou ſhalt live till to-morrow.

2. What availeth it to live long, when we are ſo little the better?

Alas! Long life doth not always mend us; but often increaſeth guilt.

O that we had ſpent but one day well in this world!

3. When it is morning think thou mayeſt die before night.

When evening comes, dare not to promiſe thyſelf the next morning.

Be therefore always in readineſs; and ſo live, that death may never take thee unprepared.

Many die ſuddenly, and when they look not for it; for *in ſuch an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.* Matt. xxiv. 44.

When that laſt hour ſhall come, thou wilt have a far different opinion of thy whole life.

4. How wiſe and happy is he, that laboureth to be ſuch in his life, as he wiſhes to be found at the hour of his death!

Whilſt thou art in health, thou mayeſt do much good: but when thou art ſick, I know not what thou wilt be able to do.

Few by ſickneſs grow better; and they who travel much are ſeldom ſanctified.

5. Truſt not in friends and kindred, neither put off the care of thy ſoul till hereafter; for men will ſooner forget thee than thou art aware of.

If thou art not careful for thyſelf now, who will be careful for thee hereafter!

The time preſent is very precious—now is the day of ſalvation. now is the acceptable time.

But, alas! that thou ſhouldſt ſpend thy time no better here, where thou mighteſt purchaſe eternal life! The time will come, when thou ſhalt deſire one day or hour to amend in, and I cannot ſay it will be granted thee.

6. Ah, fool, why doſt thou think to live long,—when thou canſt not promiſe to thyſelf one day.

How many have been deceived, and ſuddenly ſnatched away!

How often doſt thou hear, ſuch a man is ſlain, another is drowned, a third has broken his neck with a fall; this man died eating, and that playing!

One periſhed by fire, another by the ſword, another of the plague, another was ſlain by thieves. Thus death is the end of all; and man's life ſuddenly paſſeth away like a ſhadow.

7. Now, while thou haſt time, lay up for thyſelf everlaſting riches. Think of nothing but thy ſoul's ſalvation, care for nothing but the things of God.

Send to God thy daily prayers and ſighs and tears, that after death thy ſpirit may happily paſs to the Lord. *Amen.*

## *A Hymn, on Time's Rapidity.*

TIME by moments ſteal's away,
First the hour, and then the day;
Small the daily loſs appears,
Yet it ſoon amounts to years:
Days, and months, and years are flown,
They are now no more our own,
If they brought a promis'd good,
Than the years before the flood.

Let not you and I forget
They have left us much in debt;
Favours from the Lord receiv'd,
Sins that have his Spirit griev'd,
Mark'd by an unerring hand,
In his book recorded ſtand;
Who can tell the vaſt amount
Plac'd to each of our account?

Happy the believing ſoul!
Chriſt for you has paid the whole;
While you own the debt is large,
You may plead a full diſcharge;
But, poor careleſs ſinner, ſay,
What can you to Juſtice pay?
Tremble, leſt, when life is paſt,
Into priſon you be caſt!

Will you ſtill increaſe the ſcore?
Still be careleſs as before;
Oh! forbid it, gracious Lord,
Touch their ſpirits by thy word:
Now, in mercy, to them ſhow
What a mighty debt they owe!
All their unbelief ſubdue;
Let them find forgiveneſs too.

*FINIS.*

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